



## 59 Reasons for CDC to Celebrate 2005

An Open letter to CDC staff from Dr. Julie L. Gerberding, Director, CDC,

In the recent weeks, I have had the opportunity to meet with CDC staff to acknowledge and thank you for your extraordinary accomplishments in 2005. Collectively, your work is a powerful force in protecting people's health in America and around the globe.

Below are some examples of your wonderful accomplishments this year, CDC's 59<sup>th</sup> year as a federal public health agency. They are listed under each of the CDC strategic imperatives but they are in no particular order. There are many more which are not included and many more will be achieved. I look forward to sharing and celebrating each with you in the year to come.

### Health Impact focus

1. We launched our new agency-wide Health Protection Goals.
2. We created the first four cross-agency collaborative teams ("Trailblazers") to develop health protection goal action plans in four priority areas (obesity, influenza, preparedness, and adolescent health), and dedicated all flexible FY05 resources to support new projects in these areas.
3. We developed a comprehensive national "Home MedKit Evaluation Plan" in less than six weeks by engaging a network of 119 experts across CDC.
4. We successfully linked our BioSense project to Secretary Leavitt's Health Information Technology (HIT) initiative, which is now one of the leading edge projects linking public health and electronic medical records.
5. We initiated new Adolescent Health Protection Goal projects targeting injury prevention in collaborative sustainable projects that will lead to an impact on injury rates among teens.
6. We expanded the "Learn the Signs – Act Early" national campaign to encourage parents and healthcare professionals to recognize early signs of learning disabilities and developmental delays.
7. We supported the "Screen for Life" national campaign to encourage screening for colon cancer with the help of Katie Couric, Morgan Freeman, and many others.
8. We coordinated our tsunami relief activities through CDC Thailand and HHS so our team almost immediately was on the frontlines of the response.
9. We created the government's first collaborative "Response Resilience Team" during the tsunami response, in conjunction with SAMHSA and extramural experts, to support the mental health needs of relief and rescue workers as well as the needs of affected persons.
10. We networked scientists from the NCID botulism team and NCEH mass spectrophotometry team to develop a new breakthrough technology for toxin and similar enzyme detection.
11. We teamed experts from at least nine CDC Centers to achieve high influenza vaccination rates among risk groups despite a severe vaccine shortage in the 2004-2005 flu season.
12. Together with scientists in academia, we developed two new safe and non-toxic insect repellents.
13. Together with scientists at USDA and the private sector, we developed and licensed the first ever DNA vaccine, which prevents West Nile Virus infection in horses.
14. We and our many partners eliminated rubella and achieved the highest ever childhood immunization rates in the United States.



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15. We deployed more than 200 CDC experts to support public health requirements in the states affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and contributed technical expertise and leadership to the environmental health assessment in the city of New Orleans.
16. We characterized the emergence of avian influenza strains in Asia to speed up vaccine production capabilities.
17. We created a pandemic preparedness team to develop and exercise our detailed operations plans and are contributing to the Secretary's Pandemic Summits for states and local communities.
18. We created Pandemic Preparedness Checklists for states and communities, businesses, education, faith-based groups, and other sectors.
19. We supported evaluations of rapid HIV testing which indicated that access to rapid testing increases access to treatment.

#### Customer-Centricity

20. We remain the most credible health agency in government according to national opinion polls.
21. We created the new National Center for Health Marketing and the National Center for Public Health Informatics—firsts in government.
22. We published and disseminated the “Guide to Community Preventive Services: What Works to Promote Health”—the first published compendium of evidence-based interventions that protect health.
23. We achieved the highest ever Web usage—attracting about 11 million people each month to our website.
24. We responded to more than 500,000 CDC Hotline calls since the consolidated agency-wide hotline was created in February 2005.
25. We conducted a second employee Pulse Check and created an action plan to address ongoing concerns, including the “Ton of Feathers (Ton of Stones)” project to work on the day-to-day annoyances and problems that detract from the quality of work life at CDC.
26. We have expanded the scope and content of “CDC Connects,” our internet portal, which is now accessed by more than 5,000 CDC staff on a daily basis.

#### Health Protection Research

27. We completed the first ever CDC-wide research guide with public, partner, agency, and expert participation to identify the information we need to succeed in our goals.
28. We created a new Office of Public Health Research to coordinate our extramural research programs and peer-review processes.
29. We launched our Health Protection Research Initiative to support our new strategies and goals and thus far have funded extramural investigators to define the most cost-effective ways to achieve “workplace wellness”; supported new Centers of Excellence in health economics, health communications, and informatics sciences; and created a health protection research training grant program in academic centers.
30. We became an official member of the National Biodefense Research Coalition at Fort Detrick, Maryland, where we are collaborating with four Cabinets (Homeland Security, Department of Defense, Department of Health and Human Services (NIAID, NCI), and U.S. Department of Agriculture) to conduct collaborative research to prevent, detect, mitigate, and recover from biological threats.
31. We have moved into two new world-class laboratory facilities and will have the largest and most modern BSL-4 laboratory capability in the world.
32. We have achieved 95 percent external peer-review of our research.
33. We began utilizing the NIH IMPAC II system for all research grant transactions are moving all grants to this system.



### Leadership

34. We continued our drive to be the safest and healthiest workplace by successfully executing the policies that make CDC Atlanta campuses "tobacco-free," supporting access to fresh produce on campuses, opening new "Lifestyle" facilities, improving the nutritional quality of food choices in our cafeterias, and augmenting the scope and breadth of our entire Occupational Safety and Health program.
35. We redesigned our leadership and management structures and processes and established the Executive Leadership Board to provide strategic direction, the Management Council to provide operational direction; the Center Leadership Council to ensure scientific and programmatic excellence, comprehensiveness, and innovation; and the Division Directors Council to provide technical expertise and frontline input and oversight into our leadership and management decisions. We also chartered an Excellence in Learning Council, a Health Marketing Council, and similar networks of leaders and experts to improve connectivity and decentralize decisions across CDC.
36. We recruited 7 new National Center Directors with international scientific recognition to lead our categorical research and program innovations and a team of 14 Executive Leaders to serve as Chiefs of our Coordinating Centers and Offices.
37. We conducted a comprehensive diversity survey and created a Diversity Team to take specific actions with measurable outcomes to improve our workforce diversity.
38. We created a quarterly day-long leadership development curriculum for CDC leaders that so far has included a Diversity Forum, a Forecasting Workshop, and Leadership Development Forum, and a Forum on the Challenges of Transformation.
39. We honored Commissioned Corps members who earned promotions and got new CDC leadership positions qualified for flag officer billets, and achieved the highest state of "readiness" in HHS.
40. We honored our Laboratory Response Network team as a finalist for the prestigious "Innovations in Government" award.
41. With the National Association of City and County Health Officials, we are conducting a public health workforce survey to assess workforce needs now and in the future.
42. We have reached our milestones toward accreditation of public health agencies across the country.

### Global Health Impact

43. With our partners, we exceeded the President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief goals for preventing and treating HIV infection in the 15 countries in this program, achieved the lowest ever global measles infection incidence, and successfully scaled up polio eradication efforts in regions with outbreaks.
44. We established a new International Emerging Infectious Disease program site in Cairo, Egypt, and expanded our sites in Kenya and Thailand.
45. We networked the CDC teams in 43 countries and augmented global disease detection efforts across all our field stations and training sites.
46. We created bilateral financial and scientific support agreements with priority Asian countries to detect and respond to avian influenza.
47. We detailed a senior CDC scientist to Iraq to support development of public health services in the new government.
48. We established a Global Business Roundtable, with the help of the CDC Foundation, to engage leaders of international businesses in our global health protection initiatives.



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49. We opened a new Global Communication Center that will help make our health protection tools and information accessible to the global community.
50. We have increased the number and capability of our Quarantine and Border Health stations at ports of entry to improve our capacity to prevent infectious disease threats in the United States.
51. We are supporting the President's Malaria Initiative and will help improve access to bed nets, vector control, and medical treatments in targeted countries.

#### Accountability

52. We recruited a team of eight Chief Management Officials with extensive management experience from inside and outside of government and created a Management Council to help modernize our processes and improve our management efficiency and effectiveness.
53. We redirected approximately \$125 million dollars and 900 positions away from indirect support of our mission and increased scientific and programmatic activities in our Divisions by more than 600 positions through these management efficiencies.
54. We successfully recruited senior management officials to work as CDC's first "portfolio managers" in six states (Ohio, Florida, New York, Texas, Arkansas, Washington) and Washington, D.C., to improve our health impact by leveraging our \$5 billion investment in grants to states.
55. We created a new enterprise-wide system (HeathImpact.net) that allows us for the first time to track projects, performance, budget, and health impact in one uniform electronic system across the agency.
56. We completed the next phase of our buildings and facilities master plan on budget and on time and are moving into a state-of-the-art biosafety level 3 and 4 laboratory building, the Global Communications Center, the Learning Center, the Headquarters and Emergency Operations Center, and the Environmental Health laboratory building so that our world class teams can work in the space they deserve—almost 1 million square feet of new space.
57. We formally reorganized CDC and preserved people's job grade and pay.
58. We achieved more "green lights" in support of the President's Management Agenda and initiated a major Management Council focus on key performance indicators for all agency business, and as a result, have reduced cycle times and improved many services (e.g., hiring, contract and grant awards, helpdesk call resolutions).
59. We responded to public health challenges with professionalism and world-renowned expertise.